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The Marginalisation of Social Justice as a Form of Knowledge in Teacher Education in England.

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Abstract:

This paper utilises the analytical concepts developed in the work of Basil Bernstein to reflect on the ways in which discourses such as social justice are especially vulnerable in teacher education in England. In particular, under new-managerial regimes the forms of knowledge which are emphasised and valued focus on the instrumental and performative. As a consequence, critical and vertical forms of knowledge associated with social justice in teacher education are either absent or marginalised and reframed away from an appreciation and awareness of the structural and economic causes of inequality. Moreover, the criteria needed to effectively introduce social justice as a knowledge base in teacher education are positioned antithetically to neo-liberalism–neo-conservatism, making them arguably impossible to achieve within the current system of education in England.

Keywords: Teacher Education, Social Justice, Bernstein.

Introduction

From the latter part of the 20th Century to the present, successive UK governments have worked to replace the social democratic consensus and to restructure the Welfare State (Clarke and Newman 1998). Consequently, the purposes of education in the 21st Century have been (re)articulated away from any social welfarist notion of education playing a central role in socially engineering a more inclusive, just and egalitarian society, to one in which the central concern is on the individual abilities of pupils, schools and workers to compete in a global market economy. Commentators writing about these changes in the 1980s and 1990s (see for example Furlong et al 2000) refer to the notion of the New Right, a position constituted by a range of ideas drawn from two major strands: neo-liberalism and neo-

conservatism. Whereas neo-liberalism emphasised the market, neo-conservatism emphasised national authority and traditional culture; with both sharing a common critical standpoint against egalitarianism and collectivism (Furlong et al 2000).

Our contention in this paper is that in order to understand the changing relationship between teacher education and social justice in England, it is necessary to frame this against both neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism: the former in terms of understanding the wider policy shifts in the restructuring of teacher education and the latter in terms of the content of those programmes. We commence the paper by outlining how we perceive policy and the discursive shift towards the European and global dominance of neo-liberalism. The paper then considers the changes in teacher education in England and the potential consequences of these changes in relation to teacher engagement with social justice. Finally, the paper utilizes analytical concepts developed in the work of Basil Bernstein to theoretically reflect on the ways in which discourses such as social justice are especially vulnerable in teacher education in England under neo-liberal regimes due to the ways in which those forms of knowledge which are emphasised and valued focus on the instrumental and performative. As a consequence critical and vertical forms of knowledge associated with equipping teachers to critically engage with social justice are either absent or marginalised and reframed away from an appreciation and awareness of the structural and economic causes of inequality.

The contribution to the debate we seek make is both needed and timely. As for instance Dover (2013) suggests, research relating to the tensions and multiple interpretations of social justice in education is quite common but there has been little attention as yet given to the fragmentation of the teacher education curriculum and what this means for teacher educators who teach for social justice (Dover 2013, 89). Moreover, this relative absence adds to an already under-researched field concerning the relationship between social justice oriented teacher preparation and pupil outcomes (Cochran-Smith et al, 2010; Dover, 2013).

Framing Education Policy

Understandings of policy have moved beyond viewing it as a discrete entity, merely the output of a political system, to understanding policy as a process that brings certain principles or ideas into practice (Ham and Hill 1993). Ranson (1995, 440) highlights the purpose of policy for governments to 'codify and publicise the values which are to inform future practice and thus encapsulate prescriptions for reform'. This viewpoint is in keeping with Olssen, Codd, and O'Neill (2004, 72) when he states 'Policy here is taken to be any course of action [...] relating to the selection of goals, the definition of values or the allocation

of resources'. A connection is thus made between policy and governance, and more specifically understanding policy in relationship to 'the exercise of political power and the language [discourse] that is used to legitimate that process' (Olssen Codd and O'Neill 2004, 72).

As Ball (1998, 124) contends, 'policies are [...] ways of representing, accounting for and legitimating political decisions'. Moreover, because of their nature they go to the heart of the relationship between the state and the welfare of its citizens (Hill, 1996). Thus the concept of policy is entangled with notions of public and social issues such as social justice, the solutions to these issues, and the role of the state in providing these solutions. Education policy therefore represents an important site for the 'playing out' of political control and authority over the very nature of education (including that of teacher education), what its purpose, how it manifests through structures and practices (for example through schooling, curriculum, pedagogy), and what issues it prioritises and neglects (for example standards, equity) in different contexts of practice.

In the 21st Century a particular discursive and generic international policy response by nation states and national governments can be identified. As Ball (2008) observes:

An unstable, uneven but apparently unstoppable flood of closely interrelated reform ideas is permeating and re-orientating education systems in diverse social and political locations with very different histories. This convergence has given rise to what can be called a generic global policy ensemble that rests on a set of basic and common policy technologies [...] marketisation, managerialism and performativity and [...] the increasing colonisation of education policy by economic policy imperatives. (Ball 2008, 39)

Marketisation relates to a move by countries to a system of provision in which decision-making and power is devolved to increasingly diversified types of educational providers drawn from both state, voluntary and private sectors, frequently located in a competitive environment in which recipients of education (students and parents) are given greater choice (Ball 2008). The policy technology of managerialism is the increasing influence and adaptation of theories, models and techniques from business management into state sector institutions such as schools. Responsibility for the delivery of services is delegated within an organisation with a focus on quality, innovation, problem solving and customer/user satisfaction (Ball 2008).

Performativity derives from the state increasingly setting institutions a range of targets to be achieved, against which they are held accountable, and can be measured and compared. In adopting this standards based agenda the state no longer directly intervenes in dictating

what and how institutions must operate, rather it facilitates a process of indirect governance, whereby the actions of institutions are determined by performance (Ball 2008).

Cumulatively, this discursively informed and constructed global policy ensemble of marketisation, managerialism and performativity of education, impacts on individuals, groups and institutions 'to reconstitute social relations' (Ball 2008, 42-43). As Grimaldi (2012) states

The discursive constellation composing the new global orthodoxy is increasingly re-defining the domains of validity, normativity and actuality (Foucault 1972, 68) in education according to an economic rationale. These domains are the frameworks of meaning within which truth and falsehood of any statement is discussed, certain statements are excluded or marginalised as well as problems and their solutions are thought and enacted by education policy-makers and professionals.

(Grimaldi 2012, 1132)

Clearly, such a process is not neutral; as Foucault (1977, 49) observes, 'practices systematically form the objects of which they speak [...]. Discourses are not about objects, they do not identify objects they constitute them and in practice of doing so conceal their own invention'. Thus specific education policy discourses are deliberately and constructively (re)used, (re)emphasised and (re)iterated until they enter the public consciousness and become reified.

Marketisation, managerialism and performativity are the expression of the currently dominant global neoliberal ideology, and it is this ideology that largely conditions our interaction with new ideas, articulating 'new ways of thinking about what we do, what we value and what our purposes are' (Ball 2008, 42-43). Neoliberalism permeated and supported at times by neoconservatism is thus reifying in the English policy context a particular perception and approach to teacher education and social justice.

In the following section we commence the process of considering the ways in which teacher education in England has been restructured and rearticulated.

Teacher Education in England

In reflecting on the changes in teacher education in England over the last 50 the pre-neoliberal 1950-70s may be described as the 'golden-age' of higher education control (Le Grand, 1997), in which providers of teacher education had a large degree of autonomy over programme design and delivery (Husbands 2008). The 1963 Robbins Report (Ministry of Education, 1963) supported the development of an all-graduate teaching profession throughout the UK. The notion was to build a strong scientifically grounded professional

knowledge base for teachers. However, the first content of University courses largely developed out of the research interests of professors of education (Crook 2002). The key disciplines of study informing this foundational development were the psychology, history, philosophy and sociology of education.

Despite its 'golden-age' ascription even during this period the content of courses and the balance between school-based teaching practice and time spent in university was an issue of debate (Thomas, 1990). The debate itself operating as a proxy between balancing the need for theorised knowledge as provided by universities with the practical classroom knowledge provided by the schools. Subsequently, in the 1970s the James Report into teacher education signalled a policy reappraisal of the balance between theory and practice in teacher education, stating 'Many courses place too much emphasis on educational theory at the expense of adequate preparation for students' responsibilities in their first professional assignments' (DES 1972). Following this, in the 1970s teacher education witnessed a gradual reduction in the theoretical content of the curriculum, as subject and professional studies along with teaching practice (i.e. time spent in practical school-based training), began to feature more noticeably (Crook, 2002). Moreover, this de-theorisation process was given added momentum with the election of a Conservative government in 1979 committed to implementing a New Right (neo-liberal and neo-conservative) political agenda, and to reforming the content of what it perceived as an over theorised teacher training curriculum.

In 1983 the UK government established the Council for Accreditation of Teacher Preparation (CATE), with the role of monitoring the provision of English teacher education, and which linked institutional accreditation with specific criteria that training institutions had to satisfy. In 1989 CATE published further criteria that required training to focus upon subject studies, curriculum studies and subject application, within which any reference to the acquisition of any wider theoretical disciplinary-based knowledge was noticeably absent. From 1994 the teacher education system in England had in place a deliberately de-theorised skills-based craft-orientated model, based on a centralised competence-based (subsequently standards-based) assessment framework facilitated through a predominantly school-focused training programme (Beach and Bagley 2013). The latest Education Act 2011 continues and reiterates that tradition.

The neo-liberal and neo-conservative critiques of the University-based system of teacher education as ineffective and over theorised, coupled with the argument for a stronger practical skills based 'training' can be perceived as a deliberate attempt to open up teacher education to market forces. Subsequently, it can only be when skills (the domain of school-

based practice) rather than education theory (the domain of university teaching), that schools can be (re)positioned as teacher education providers and be placed in competition with HEI's. This can be evidenced in England with the growth of school-based teacher education initiatives such as Teach First by which graduates elect to receive on the job training in schools rather than attend a PGCE after graduating with a first degree. Ultimately, there is created (especially with the growth in private providers of education within the state system) a free market in training itself. Indeed, academy schools in England are already able to recruit who they want trained or untrained as it is no longer a requirement to hold Qualified Teacher Status to teach in those schools..

The quasi-market in teacher education in England is thus provided a centrally controlled narrow technical focus based on measurable classroom skills and craft performance. In such a context any disciplinary based opportunity for sociological, philosophical, historical or psychological engagement with issues in teacher education such as social justice is at best extremely marginalised, if not totally removed; the reliance on any opportunities for such 'officially sanctioned' reflection and discussion largely reliant on their incorporation into the competencies and standards governing teacher education in England.

Competencies, Standards and Social Justice

Before considering the specific competences and standards informing teacher education in England it is necessary to allude to the wider educational New Right (neo-conservative and neo-liberal) backdrop from which they emerged and in which they are situated. Neo-conservative ideas place an educational emphasis upon the transmission through schooling of traditional authority, moral values, national identity and cultural heritage. In this sense the right-wing critiques which informed the restructuring and re-articulation of teacher education in England were infused with anti-egalitarian sentiment. Indeed, the notion that teacher education programmes were focused on issues of inequality and imbuing students with anti-colonialist knowledge was presented by the politically ascendant and powerful New Right as a key reason why change was so desperately needed. As Furlong et al (2000) observe:

The views of neo-conservatives on teacher education in the 1980s were trenchant. For example, the Hillgate Group (1989) accused most courses of being intellectually 'feeble and biased' and being overly concerned with topics such as race, sex, class and even 'anti-imperialist' education. According to the Hillgate Group, these 'preoccupations' appeared 'designed to stir up disaffection, to preach a spurious gospel of "equality" and to subvert the entire traditional curriculum' (Hillgate 1989: 5).

(Furlong et al., 2000, 11)

Similar neo-conservative influence and concerns impacted on the development of the National Curriculum (NC). For example, Tomlinson (2005) observes the first chair of the NC Council reporting 'that it was made "starkly clear" to him by Conservative Ministers that any references to multicultural education would be unacceptable' (Tomlinson 2005 cited in Smith 2013, 432). Significantly, even after the publication of reports such as that by MacPherson (1999) recommending a change to the curriculum to more strongly reflect the multi-ethnic composition of society (Smith 2013), the predominant neo-conservative predisposition has remained and continues to have a strong discursive hold over the NC and any counter political pressure to infuse the curriculum with a stronger acknowledgement of even diversity, let alone anti-racism, appears to have largely evaporated. 'The presumed neutrality and objectivity of a standardised curriculum (and tests) has become, over time, naturalised' (Smith 2013, 432). In the context of teacher education this is important as the competences and standards which they are expected to possess are directly related to the nature of the curriculum they will be professionally expected to deliver.

In terms of legislation related to equality there are statutory imposed legal obligations to which educational providers have a duty comply, such as the Equality Act 2010, which applies to England and other parts of the UK.. The primary purpose of the Act is to consolidate the complicated and numerous Acts and Regulations, which form the basis of anti-discrimination law in Great Britain. This legislation has the same goals as the four major EU Equal Treatment Directives, whose provisions it mirrors and implements.

The Equality Act 2010 includes a specific chapter on education and a sub-section on schools. This sub-section places legal obligations on the responsible body of the school (for example the local authority, governing body, proprietor) not to discriminate on grounds of race, gender, disability, religion, belief and sexual orientation in terms of pupil admission and treatment, the way it provides education, the way it affords access to a benefit, facility or service, or excluding the pupil from the school.

Schools have a specific duty in relation to the Equality Act 2010 to publish information which shows they have due regard for equalities, as defined by the Act and to publish at least one equality objective. The information and objectives have to be published and updated annually and this annual updating should include an indication of progress on achieving the objectives. In regulatory terms the incentive for schools and their staff to comply with the

Equality Act 2010 is loosely evidenced in relation to the national school inspection framework implemented by Ofsted (2013) which focuses on pupils' and parents' needs by

....evaluating the extent to which schools provide an inclusive environment which meets the needs of all pupils, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

(Ofsted 2013, 14)

Ostensibly, schools in England are bound by the equality legislation, which is intended to inform and guide the professional decisions they make and the subsequent Ofsted inspection delivery of education in schools. Further, professional associations and trade unions in the UK (such as the National Association of Head teachers in England) may provide advice and guidance to schools on the drafting of their own equal opportunities policy to assist in their alignment with the national policy.

The aim is that the adoption of a school-based policy will help the school identify, prevent, and redress unfair discrimination against disadvantaged groups. The school-based policy may include a statement of commitment to social justice, detailed policy and procedures for implementation, and how the policy will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated. The drafting of such a policy is not mandatory and therefore without any nationally available data it is not possible to ascertain how many schools in England have such a policy or if they are acted upon once in place.

In England, with its strong neo-liberal managerialist emphasis on institutional autonomy, the impetus to address social justice resides very much at the level of the individual school. Similarly, while opportunities for professional development in the area of equality training do exist (although markedly limited in relation to more performative focused training) it is very difficult to ascertain the degree to which school leaders or teachers are undertaking such training, or addressing issues of social justice in their day to day practice.

The Conservative government introduced the first sets of statutory teacher competences between 1984 –1993. These teacher competences were subsequently reframed as standards by the Labour government in 1997. Labour subsequently published two more sets of standards in 2002 and 2007, with the Coalition government introducing a new set of standards in 2012. The aim of these competences and standards was to enable central government inspection, measurement and assessment of institutional and individual performance in relation to teacher education. Thereby, discursively controlling what trainee

teachers were taught. Teacher educators now needed to demonstrate evidence of having 'done what is required' for student teachers to 'acquire' the competences and standards specified. As policy texts the competences and standards provide an important indication of government thinking on social justice and teacher education.

In the following we draw heavily on Smith (2013) who articulates the ways in which the discursive nature of these competences and standards in relation to social justice have changed (and in some facets continued) as political power has shifted in England from Conservative to Labour to Coalition governments. For example, the 1993 competences issued under a Conservative government contain absolutely no guidance or reference for newly qualified teachers to be able to address any issues related to equality (Smith, 2013). In contrast under the subsequent Labour government the standards published in 2002 are 'the most verbose of all the documents complete with extended guidance. References to equality are copious in comparison to all preceding and subsequent documents' (Smith 2013, 437). For example students are required to:

have high expectations of all pupils; respect their social, cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic backgrounds; and are committed to raising their educational achievement. (S1.1)

establish a purposeful learning environment where diversity is valued. (S3.3.1)

take account of and support pupils' varying needs so that girls and boys, from all ethnic groups, can make good progress. (S3.1.2),

select and prepare resources, and plan for their safe and effective organisation, taking account of pupils' interests and their language and cultural backgrounds, with the help of support staff where appropriate. (S3.1.3)

With the help of an experienced teacher, they can identify the levels of attainment of pupils learning English as an additional language. They begin to analyse the language demands and learning activities in order to provide cognitive challenge as well as language support. (S3.2.5)

(Smith 2013, 437)

The standards introduced by the Labour government are perceived as reflecting a wider political commitment to acknowledging the existence of racism and the need for a strengthening of multicultural and anti-racist practices reinforced by law, as evidenced at the time in the Macpherson Report (1999) and the Race relations (Amendment) Act (2000) (Smith 2013). However, whatever the potential for the advancement of social justice contained within these wider policy pronouncements and the 2002 standards, the events of 9/11 and the London bombings of 2005 are identified by Smith (2012) as a discursive turning point. In essence, the Labour government's 2007 standards are de-racialized and reflect again a wider political discursive shift, this time away from multiculturalism and anti-racism and using race-related language to one framed around notions of community and community-cohesion (Smith 2013). As a consequence the salience and centrality of race in discussions of marginalisation and discrimination' (Mirza and Rampersad 2010, 16 cited in Smith 2013, 440) is reduced and the perceived relevancy to teachers' understanding of issues around social justice and diversity as evidenced in teacher education markedly downplayed and downscaled.

This 'colour blind' trend which was further reinforced by the standards introduced by the coalition government in 2012, in which – in an echo of the 1993 competences- there is no reference to racism or ethnicity. Teachers must simply 'have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these' (point 5; 2nd bullet point), with 'no attempt to detail what such factors could be or how teachers alone can overcome these' (Smith, 2013, 441) Further, in the introduction there is a glossary detailing definitions the first item of which is 'Fundamental British values', citing 'democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs'. This list of values is repeated in part two of the standards under personal and professional conduct where teachers are instructed not to undermine fundamental British values. The neo-conservative influence in the drafting of these standards is self-evident.

Interestingly Smith (2013, 443) cites a small scale study undertaken by Jerome and Clemitshaw (2012) of postgraduate secondary citizenship and history student teachers. The study asked students their views on teaching British values, and discovered them to be 'overwhelmingly sceptical about being asked to deliver what they considered to be propaganda-like messages through their teaching', and most who had 'experienced teaching about Britishness ...linked the concept to the diversity of the British population' Jerome and Clemitshaw (2012, 38).

While we would not wish to claim too much from the findings of the study by Jerome and Clemitshaw (2012), it is important to acknowledge, as Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) suggest, that practitioners (including those being educated to be teachers) do not necessarily interpret policy texts naively. They have their own histories and values and they also work within their own particular institutional constraints.

There is therefore potentially a gap between what is actually implemented and what is intended by those responsible for framing particular policy texts, including those related to teacher education. Thus while it is important to acknowledge the discursive dominance and impact of neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism on a national (and global) level, it is equally important to appreciate that the matching of policy rhetoric with practice is never straightforward and that policy responses are usually highly contextualised, complex and fragmented (Beach et al, 2014). In essence, there are no universal 'truths' about policy implementation, the journey from principle to practice - even if discursively framed in a particular way - is a contested one that involves institutions and individuals in a process of 'creative social action' (Ball, 1998, p. 270). This is a crucial point, as contestation provides a political space in which dominant policy discourses are not simply accepted unproblematically at face value, but may be challenged, nuanced, reformulated, and changed.

Notwithstanding this potential, Smith (2013) importantly observes in relation to the competences and standards:

...across each document from 1984 to 2012, it is interesting to note that maintenance of the status quo is also assured by complete avoidance of the need for collective responsibility or responsibility of the state for the eradication of social and economic inequities and the elimination of discriminatory practices at a societal as well as an institutional level

(Smith 2013 443)

Discursively the standards and competences must be read and understood not simply as infusing neo-conservative values into teacher education, but also in line with neo-liberalism, as ensuring the state or educational institutions are afforded or acknowledged no role in addressing social justice in so far as it relates to the eradication of social and economic inequalities. Subsequently the neo-liberal informed notion of social justice is discursively

shifted markedly away from any critical 'distributional, cultural or associational idea of social justice' (Cribb and Gewirtz 2003, 18) to one which focuses away from the state to the institution and the individual, As Grimaldi (2012, 113) observes 'Discourses of school effectiveness, standardisation, meritocracy and performativity do not address any of the wider structural inequalities'.

The increased emphasis on issues around performance measures in schools and skills in teacher education discursively frames what is defined as effective teaching and in so doing discursively repositions educational responses to social justice (Zeichner 2010). There is a discursive shift here, this being such that any policy attempt to introduce or even acknowledge the need for wider social egalitarian outcomes around for example economic redistribution, becomes extremely difficult if not impossible and certainly absent from policy prescriptions ascertaining to teacher education in England. Teacher education policy and its central role in shaping the 'new' teaching professionals is reformulated away from any reflection on issues of social justice, as higher education institutional freedom and autonomy is eroded or replaced and subordinated to national government determined pronouncements, audits and inspections emanating from outside the academy, informed by neo liberal modes of governance and control, and constituted by a constantly shifting prescribed list of behaviours, competencies and standards against which teachers professional work is to be determined and assessed (Beck, 2009). Social justice is re-imagined and repositioned as largely a private or possibly institutionally contained matter to be addressed, if at all, through individual commitment, rather than state intervention.

Jessop (2002, 199) uses the term 'destatization' to argue that neo-liberalism has created a "de-stated" model of governance, in which individuals are given responsibility for social issues that were, under the previous welfare model, considered to be the responsibility of the state, defined as the 'formal government apparatus' (Lumby and Muijs 2013, 14). Under "de-stated" governance, the state no longer takes responsibility for such things as social mobility, but instead "manages", or oversees, the operation of the free market, which ostensibly delivers outcomes that are favourable to the interests of certain individuals and groups and not others.

Significantly, over the last 30 years since the competences were introduced there has been hardly any change in levels of educational attainment based on ethnicity or social class in English schools (Smith, 2013). Indeed as Ball (2013, 4) similarly points out 'inequalities of class and race remain stark and indeed have been increasing since 2008'. Moreover, as outlined in Smyth (2011), traditional forms of schooling based on standards and subject and

teacher centred pedagogy will often reinforce disadvantage. It is important he adds that teachers and teacher educators look at, reflect over and act in relation to their understandings of the multi-dimensional nature of justice and injustice in education and society and at the possible tensions between different dimensions of justice. As Gerwitz (2006) writes, these things are necessary in order to grasp and act constructively in relation to the mediated nature of socially just practices, which requires deep knowledge about and sensitivity toward 'the differences in contexts and levels' in which education and social justice can be enacted (Gerwitz 2006, 79). Any meaningful discussion about what justice entails needs to engage with concrete practical dilemmas, theoretical and conceptual understanding and not merely abstract conceptualisation (Gerwitz, 2006). Current standards based teacher education curricula in England fall well short of this.

Engaging Bernstein's Horizontal and Vertical Discourses of Knowledge

Bernstein's (1990, 2000) discussions of teacher education and teacher education pedagogic discourse can be a useful tool for analysing the 'developments' prescribed for England. Bernstein distinguishes between two fundamentally different forms of discourse in relation to university content that reflect a dichotomy between academic and everyday knowledge (Beach, 2005; Eriksson, 2009).

The first discourse is a horizontal discourse. It is embedded in everyday language and expresses common sense knowledge related to practical goals (Beach 2005). The second form of discourse is called a vertical discourse. It often develops in specialized academic disciplines like physics, mathematics or history to form a hierarchically organized conceptual structure with a robust grammar and specialized syntax that is expressed through a very esoteric language (Bernstein, 2000, 170 -171). However it is also a characteristic of the regional form of knowledge that has been presented as aimed for previously in relation to the professional knowledge base of teacher education in studies like medicine and law (Beach and Bagley 2012). Schools and universities select content from these subjects and areas according to Bernstein (2000) and act as arenas of re-contextualisation of the knowledge produced there, with a significant degree of autonomy from economic production and the political superstructure (Brante 2010). As shown previously England had a period when this form of knowledge and autonomy were argued for at a policy level but the position implied is no-longer apparent in official teacher education policy (Beach and Bagley 2013).

The differences between horizontal and vertical discourses are important (Bernstein 1999). Horizontal discourse is based on and expresses knowledge that is usually bound to a

specific practical context and its associated everyday actions. This is not insignificant at the present time, when the teacher is being increasingly exposed to influences from governments and other organizations outside the academic world (Beach, 2008, 2011). Horizontal (tacit) knowledge is not created primarily through scientific analysis and is not anchored within specialized communication with a specialised syntax and grammar produced in a meta-professional research discipline (Beach and Bagley 2012). This is very relevant to what is seemingly being encouraged in the professional knowledge base of teaching through developments like those witnessed in England from the 1970s - in which specialized content concerning the sociological, political, philosophical, economic and ideological dimensions of professional knowledge has been marginalised or replaced.

Our argument here is not that horizontal knowledge has no positive value as a basis for professional knowledge (Beach and Bagley 2012). On the contrary, there is always tacit knowledge and horizontal communication within a profession, and such processes and the knowledge carried by them is both valuable and necessary (Brante 2010). However, there is a danger that when such knowledge is in complete ascendancy - as in the case of England - the knowledge to be transferred can no-longer form a rational whole and can become both segmented and discontinuous (with strong local and regional variations) in a manner contrary to the idea of a scientific teaching profession with a shared professional knowledge component (Garm and Karlsen 2004; Kallos 2009; Beach and Bagley 2012).

A horizontal discourse on its own gives a very poor basis for developing reflective professional practice. Consequently, a vertical discourse is also needed, in the form of a robust system of concepts (Brante 2010), that can be used to describe, model and theorize from empirical situations. A vertical discourse helps teachers to understand and speak collectively about what good education is and how it might be affected by proposed and ongoing political, ideological and economic changes (Darling-Hammond 2006).

According to Apple (2001, 195) such knowledge is important in determining whether students in and after teacher-training will be able to understand the ideological and political restructuring that is going on around them and deconstruct the forces involved, in terms of their impact on working conditions and the content and meaning of professional labour (Beach 2005, 2008; Beach and Bagley 2012). It provides, in other words, a tool for analysing trends and thinking critically and strategically in order to better serve pupils in school (Apple 2001; Darling-Hammond 2006; Zeichner 2010).

In this sense the construction of a more vertically composed knowledge structure for informing professional action and reflection goes to the heart of enabling student teachers

understand and act on issues related to social justice. We would contend that developments in teacher education are discursively and politically (re)constructed with the explicit intention of changing the nature of teacher professionalism; the skills, knowledge and values of teachers (Furlong 2008) and that the process of (re) construction is aligned to ideologically informed technologies associated with neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism which subvert and subsume education as an economic imperative within global capitalism and discursively marginalise issues around social justice.

Conclusion

The relationship between teacher education and social justice in England has been shown to be particularly problematic and historically and ideologically subject to the New Right's commitment to neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism. The policies of successive governments have discursively repositioned and re articulated teacher education towards a quasi-marketised skills-based programme, to the extent that England's newly qualified teachers have been denied access to any critically and theoretically informed vertical knowledge that would enable them to take a critical distance from practice. Rather, in a rapidly changing and complex multi-cultural society, England's teachers are now only being equipped with a predominantly horizontal knowledge discourse and are thus less prepared for defining, assessing and, if necessary, responsibly adjusting their teaching to improve learning for marginalised and disadvantaged students and addressing question of social justice.

Moreover, the content of teacher education programmes in terms of the standards they require newly qualified teachers to achieve – and which could still afford some optimal opportunity to address social justice - currently fail to acknowledge social justice even at the most superficial level. On this matter a valid point might be made that asks why the standards of newly qualified teachers should be expected to be concerned with social justice when the national curriculum they will go on to teach in schools similarly makes no explicit reference.

Teaching and teacher education for social justice is a moral and political undertaking for creating rich learning and life opportunities for all children by engaging their critical thinking and making learning meaningful in their lives. The attendant ascendancy of standardised performance measures in schools, increased professional surveillance through inspection, control of curricula and emphasis on efficiency, outcomes and skills in teacher education as per current policy in England has been pointed out as having 'profound effects on defining what counts as responsive teaching' (Kaur, 2012, p. 1) and as undermining the possibilities

for educational equity and social justice in education (Beach & Bagley, 2013; Sleeter, 2008; Zeichner, 2010). In effect each aspect of the English system of education, including the education of teachers, pedagogy, curriculum content and structure of schooling, is arguably reproducing and 'widening racialised, gendered, social class-based inequalities' (Hill 2007, 214) rather than trying to reduce them. Consequently, a key question concerns the inculcation of the precise knowledge required of teachers to understand and challenge structural inequalities and promote social justice in education.

Teaching and teacher education for social justice require a more vertically composed knowledge structure enabling an integrated approach to curriculum, pedagogy and social action along with explicit instruction and education about oppression, prejudice and inequality that embraces multiple perspectives, emphasizes critical thinking and inquiry and promotes students' academic growth and civic action (Dover 2013).

A concern for social justice involves and means looking closely and critically at 'why and how our schools are unjust for some students. It means analysing school policies and practices- the curriculum, textbooks and materials, instructional strategies, tracking, recruitment and hiring of staff' (Nieto, 2000, 183). Smith (2013, 444) reflecting on 'a radical egalitarian initial teacher education (ITE) curriculum' advocates it must provide opportunities for students to be critically reflexive in a way that enables them to reflect on and challenge every day 'taken-for-granted assumptions which underpin practice' (Winter 2000, 155 cited in Smith 2013, 444), and how their 'prior life experiences, beliefs and assumptions, ... act as powerful filters through which they interpret teaching, students and communities' (Sleeter, 2008, 1950 cited in Smith 2013, 444). It would also facilitate 'a historical critique of the political, cultural, economic and social landscape' (Smith 2013, 444). None of these criteria are even close to being evidenced in teacher education in England. Indeed, the antithetical discursive positions to neo-liberal-neo-conservatism they articulate and occupy make them arguably impossible to achieve within a marketised, managerialist, and performatively driven system of education.

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